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DEPARTMENT FOR EUR/WE, NEA/RA

E.O. 12958: DECL: 12/05/2017

TAGS: PREL SP

SUBJECT: U/S BURNS MEETING WITH SPANISH FM MORATINOS ON MARGINS OF OSCE MINISTERIAL NOVEMBER 28

Classified By: DCM Hugo Llorens for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (C) SUMMARY. Under Secretary Burns and Spanish Foreign Minister Miguel Angel Moratinos met November 28 to review OSCE activities and other bilateral issues. U/S Burns delivered our messages regarding the need to protect the integrity of the OSCE and its institutions, particularly ODIHR, in the face of destructive proposals. With regard to Spanish troop deployments in Afghanistan, Moratinos said that President Zapatero was taking a cautious approach in the lead-up to the March Spanish elections, but the matter could be given more consideration afterward. Moratinos described the Annapolis Conference as a tremendous accomplishment and called for the NATO Secretary General to engage in follow-up activities with the Arab world to counter long-held negative perceptions. According to Moratinos, Spain agreed with the U.S. that the aim was an open society in Cuba, but disagreed on the timing. U/S Burns countered that Cuba could be on the cusp of historic change and that its leadership needed to have a clearly delineated path to democracy. END SUMMARY.

ODIHR

¶2. (C) With the possibility of another OSCE draft decision that would weaken ODIHR in the works, Burns advised Moratinos not to incorporate any Russian elements into a third draft. Moratinos said that his staff would have a new text for the U.S. to review, adding that the Deputy FM of Kazakhstan assured him they would not support any new Russian drafts. Moratinos said the Spanish would keep pushing Kazakhstan, including when King Juan Carlos visited Astana on an upcoming state visit. Burns agreed that the King could be an effective interlocutor and praised the King's forceful rejoinder to Venezuelan President Chavez at the Ibero American Summit.

OSCE CHAIRMANSHIP

¶3. (C) Moratinos acknowledged the U.S. concerns about Kazakhstan holding the OSCE chair, but said FM Tazhin realized his mistake in supporting Russia on ODIHR. Moratinos said Tazhin planned to issue a clear and unequivocal statement in support of ODIHR. With regard to other U.S. concerns about Kazakhstan, Moratinos said that the EU believed that the chairmanship would keep them engaged in a productive way and create more opportunities to encourage good governance.

¶4. (C) On CFE, Moratinos told Burns that since Lavrov would not arrive until 1:00 a.m. on November 29, he did not have a clear "state-of-play", but that he intended to put more

pressure on Russia to consider the U.S. proposals Moratinos described as "generous." Moratinos also said that while Russia was pushing for a charter, that Spain did not. Since he needed to find a way to move forward on a legal convention, Moratinos said he might tactically delay by setting up a committee to study the situation. Burns noted that the timing of the Russian elections was a factor and Putin already alleged State Department interference in Russian domestic issues, therefore Lavrov might make similar charges. Burns suggested taking a strong stand. While recognizing the Chair's role to bridge differences, in this case Russia was acting as a spoiler or "fox in the hen house" and Spain needed to prevent setbacks.

OSCE MANAGEMENT AND STRUCTURE - PROSPECTS FOR MINISTERIAL OUTCOMES

¶ 15. (C) Musing about the OSCE's complexity, Moratinos expressed concern that at the end of the ministerial there might not be a CFE agreement, nor a political declaration nor any other achievements while Spain held the Chair. Moratinos still hoped to negotiate a consensus statement on at least one of the issues under consideration and his team was drafting draft texts for consideration. Burns thanked Moratinos for all his efforts to advance the agenda and reminded him that the U.S. also wanted the Ministerial to be a success. After five years, another OSCE declaration would be a sign the organization was facing its challenges. At the same time, the OSCE needed to protect its integrity and in particular, the Russian ODIHR proposal was destructive.

AFGHANISTAN

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¶ 16. (C) Burns stressed to FM Moratinos the importance of more NATO allies contributing more to military efforts in Southern Afghanistan. Allies need troop deployments from Spain, as well as Italy, France, and others to strengthen NATO ISAF efforts. Moratinos said that President Zapatero was taking a cautious approach in the lead-up to the March Spanish elections, but the matter could be given more consideration afterward. He also noted that the Bucharest Summit in April would be a good forum for additional talks on Afghanistan deployments.

ANNAPOLIS CONFERENCE READOUT

¶ 17. (C) Moratinos described the Annapolis Conference as a tremendous accomplishment and said his speech aimed to capture the sense of history, given what he called a long period of inaction since the 1991 Madrid Peace Process Conference. He claimed to have received a good response to his comments on normalization. He explained that his call for mutual recognition emphasized his characterization that the current situation of strained relationships can not be termed "normal". He reflected back on 1991 and said the Annapolis Conference had a completely different and more positive atmosphere, noting that the participants applauded each other's statements this time. Moratinos believed the NATO Secretary General should follow-up after the Annapolis Conference. NATO had been viewed as a Western-bloc, destructive organization by Arab states in the past and now was a critical time to show them positive interactions that would change their minds. Burns thanked Spain for its long-term efforts to advance the peace process and the personal involvement of Moratinos. Moratinos said he had at least 10 phone calls with Syrian FM al-Muallem November 23 and 24 while he tried to assure that Syria would participate in the conference. He also described his efforts

to set up a follow-on meeting in Spain with Egyptian FM Abdul Gheit and others, but said that scheduling had not been possible.

CUBA

¶8. (C) Burns said that Cuba needed to hear strong criticism of the ruling regime at this time so the leadership could clearly understand the stakes in transition. Moratinos said he told Secretary Rice that Spain knew Cuba well, and its read was that new leadership was already taking shape. In Moratinos' analysis, Castro was no longer in power. Spain saw signs of internal debate reflecting that transition was underway now, but that given entrenched interests, it would be a slow and gradual process. Spain agreed with the U.S. that the aim was an open and democratic society in Cuba, but disagreed on the tactics and timing. He said that pushing for free elections now would not work. Burns countered with his remembrances of the tide shift in Eastern European politics and how quickly and sometimes, unexpectedly, major changes could occur. With a reminder that Cuba might be on the cusp of historic change, he reiterated the U.S. conviction that we must delineate a clear path for Cuba to democracy, especially given that the democratic practices of its neighbors emphasized the country's political isolation.

¶9. (U) Meeting Participants with Under Secretary Burns and Foreign Minister Moratinos:

Spanish Director General for Europe and North America - Pepe Pons
Spanish External Political Affairs Director - Rafael Dezcollar de Mazarredo
Chief of Staff to FM Moratinos -Javier Sancho Velazquez
Assistant Secretary Fried
USOSCE Ambassador Finley
Embassy Madrid Charge Hugo Llorens
P Staff Sumona Guha
Embassy Notetaker Elizabeth Fritschle

¶10. (U) This cable was cleared by P staff.
AGUIRRE